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Build the South Mountain Freeway

04/24/2007 12:27 PM

I don't have a problem with the South Mountain Freeway that will bend through the Southwest Valley and through Ahwatukee. It definitely should be built.



JOEL NILSSON
The Arizona Republic

I also don't have a problem if it runs through the western edge of South Mountain Park. We built State Route 51 through part of the North Mountain preserves and today the park is the same jewel that it was before SR 51.

I also don't have a problem with Gov. Janet Napolitano, were she inclined, to negotiate with the Gila River Indian Community to see if an east-west route could be built on tribal land. If so, more than 200 expensive homes would not have to be destroyed along the existing alignment, which is Pecos Road. Read the latest story on [the South Mountain Freeway](#).

But be warned: It'll cost a huge sum of money to get the tribe to accept a freeway through its reservation. If memory serves, it cost an extra \$48 million for the Pima Freeway (now the Loop 101) to be built on Pima-Maricopa tribal lands. That was then Scottsdale mayor Herb Drinkwater's costly gift to Scottsdale residents who faced losing their homes.

For a freeway through the GRIC reservation the cost likely will be significantly more. Is it worth it?

At the root of this problem are developers who built homes along Pecos Road and the buyers who purchased them. Had they looked at a map, they would have seen the alignment of the South Mountain Freeway along Pecos Road.

Like I asked, is it worth the price to bail out these individuals who chose to ignore the eventual freeway?

Politicians understandably are skittish, which is why Valley mayors are in the process of asking the governor to get the GRIC tribe to negotiate.

But at what price?

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Comments:

Comment from: Tom9700

04/24/07 @ 14:57

The developers and home buyers are at the root of the problem? I never cease to be amazed at how ADOT isn't completely exposed for its total lack of incompetence. ADOT, the city, the state, etc. all had a chance to prevent this fiasco. It is coming up on a quarter of a century since this was originally planned. They had every opportunity to buy the land, or if funds were not available, to pass measures to not allow the land to be developed. What you are basically saying is that the developers and home buyers are responsible for masking the total incompetence of the govt. organizations behind all of this. How long does that need to go on for before ADOT/MAG become the root of the problem? It's been almost 25 years. Would 50 years be enough?

Comment from: Agosto6297

04/25/07 @ 08:30

Do you have a problem with spending 1.3 billion to 5 billion dollars of tax payer money for a freeway that won't ease traffic congestion?

Comment from: Ron3315

04/25/07 @ 08:46

HELLO TOM9700, The last time I checked this was still a free country. If I happened to own a piece of property and some developer wanted to give me an ungodly amount of money for it, I should have the right to sell it, any time, anywhere period. On the same subject, if a person wanted to give the developer money to build a house on that property, I say go for it, just don't cry on everyone else's parade when you didn't pick the right property for you to profit as well as your neighbor.

Comment from: Tom9700

04/25/07 @ 14:26

Ron, I believe you reinforced my point. If you notice, there was a question mark after my opening statement, meaning I was questioning the authors accusation that the developers and buyers are to fault. I don't think they are at fault one bit. My point is that ADOT and the related govt. groups have not been, and continue to not be held accountable for total incompetence and wasting of your tax dollars. It is almost scary how much they have attempted to deceive the public on this issue, and how many dollars they have wasted in the process.

Comment from: Perry5234

04/25/07 @ 20:14

Tom9700 federal enviromental rules do not allow ADOT or the City to buy ROW until the enviromentla process is complete. According to new reports that is at least a year away, they could not buy the land. Plus since the proposition on property rights pased last elction theyw ould ahve to

pay as though the land was built on already so why not wait until you actually need land?

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